

STATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.  
CEREAL HARVEST FORECAST, 1952-53.

Reports on their harvest prospects have been received from 2,878 farmers representing 42% of the total area under crop, and the estimated acreages and yields set forth in this Bulletin are based on these reports. The following summary compares the 1952-53 estimate with the actual results for 1951-52 and the mean of the 10 years ended 1951-52.

		Estimated 1952-53	Actual 1951-52	Mean 10 years to 1951-52
Wheat -	Area	Acres	1,465,000	1,613,126
	Yield	Bushels	27,500,000	27,300,839
	Average			
	Per Acre	Bushels	18.77	16.92
Barley -	Area	Acres	875,000	831,613
	Yield	Bushels	21,500,000	16,825,996
	Average			
	Per Acre	Bushels	24.57	20.23
Oats -	Area	Acres	400,000	387,377
	Yield	Bushels	6,250,000	5,404,927
	Average			
	Per Acre	Bushels	15.62	13.87
Rain, April-Nov.	Inches		15.15	16.10

COMMENTS

WHEAT. The estimate of 27,500,000 bushels for 1952-53 is slightly in excess of the actual yield of 27,300,839 bushels in 1951-52. If the present estimate is realised, the average yield of 18.77 bushels per acre will be the highest recorded since the very early years of the State when only small areas of the best land were cropped. Otherwise, the previous highest average yield was 18.18 bushels in 1942-43. The area estimated to have been reaped is 1,465,000 acres and is less than any year since 1895-96. Since 1946-47, the acreage has fallen from 2,518,948. The maximum area was 4,180,513 acres in 1930-31.

BARLEY. Based on the replies from the farmers, a yield of 21,500,000 bushels is estimated, representing an average of 24.57 bushels from 875,000 acres. This estimated yield considerably exceeds the previous record of 16,825,996 bushels in 1951-52. The estimated average yield per acre was exceeded by the 27.32 bushels recorded in 1947-48. The estimated 875,000 acres harvested for grain exceeds the previous record of 831,613 acres in 1951-52.

In past years, it has been noted that farmers have underestimated their barley yields and probably there has been similar underestimating this Season.

OATS. The estimated yield is 6,250,000 bushels, representing 15.62 bushels per acre from 400,000 acres. The estimated oat crop also exceeds the record of the previous season - 5,404,927 bushels - but the estimated yield per acre has been exceeded several times, the highest being 17.17 bushels in 1947-48 and 16.87 in 1915-16.

HAY. During recent years there have been decreased acreages cut for cereal hay, but increased acreages of meadow hay and also increased acreages of improved pasture. The estimated area of wheat, barley and oats cut for hay for 1952-53 is 138,000 acres for 203,000 tons, average 1.47 tons.

ACRES. (for all purposes). Last autumn, the farmers had intimated that they intended to sow for all purposes (grain, hay and green fodder) the following acreages - wheat 1,530,000; barley 850,000; oats 745,000. Information obtained from representative farmers after seeding confirmed the 1,530,000 acres for wheat, increased the barley acreage to 895,000 and reduced the acreage under oats to 645,000, the reason given for this decrease being that there were such large areas of self sown oats. The recent collection confirms the latter acreages for each cereal.

GENERAL. If the above estimates are realised, the total yields for barley and oats will be 27,250,000 bushels against 27,500,000 bushels of wheat. The total acreage sown with barley and oats for all purposes is 1,540,000 acres compared with 1,530,000 for wheat.

RAINFALL. The average rainfall over the Agricultural Areas for April and May was more than twice the mean. Generally speaking, the opening of the season was ideal although there was rather too much rain in the wetter districts and seeding was hindered. After the very wet opening, it was fortunate that the recordings for June and July should be below the mean and after those drier months it was fortunate that the September falls should be equal to the mean and be followed by above average falls with cool temperatures for the rest of the season. The April-November rainfall was 15.15 inches.\* The estimated wheat yield of 18.77 bushels compares with the mean of 11.01. The previous highest yield of 18.18 in 1942-43 was grown on 16.11 inches of rain, and the 16.92 bushels in 1951-52 on 16.10 inches. \*compared with the mean for the past 47 years of 12.33 inches.

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